

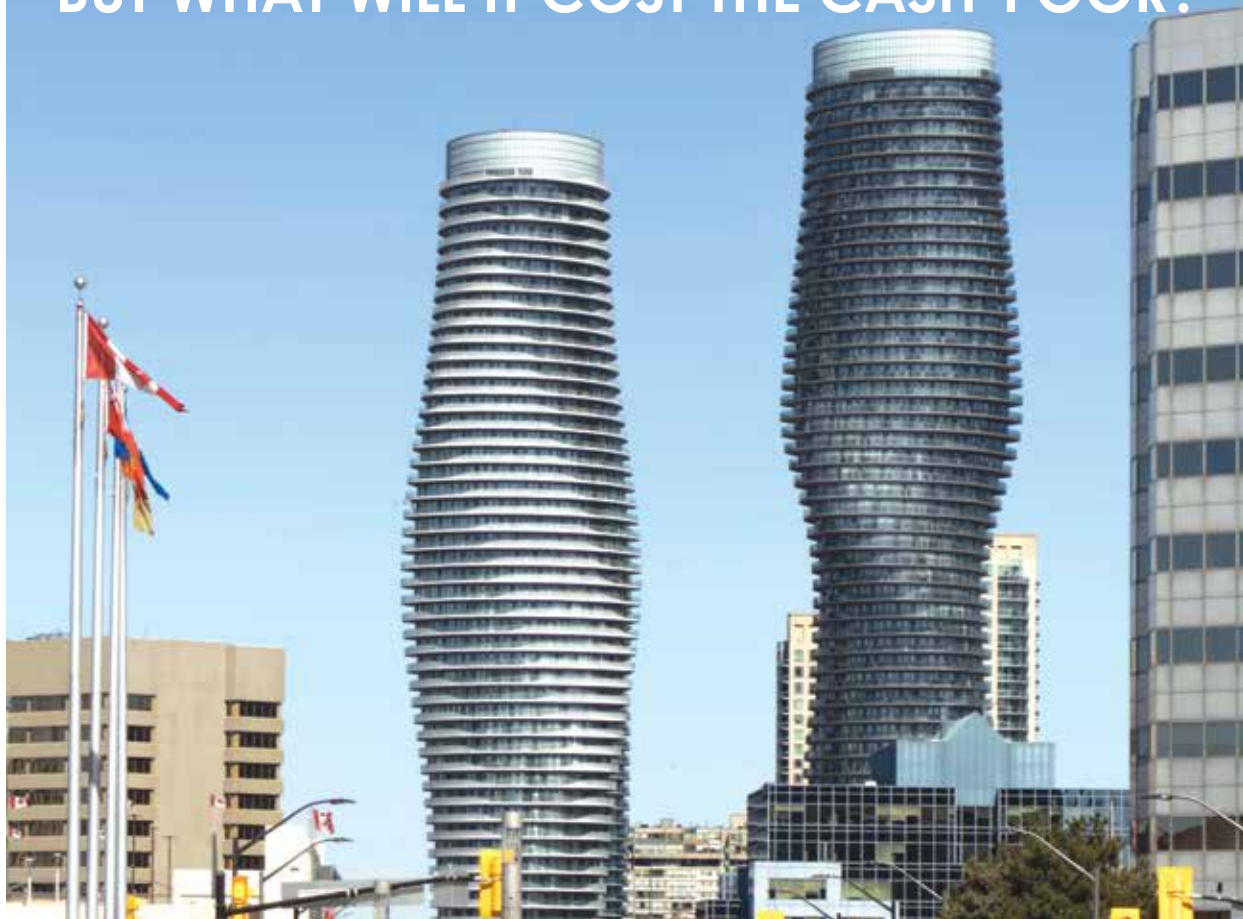
# ToughTimes

EMAIL | TOUGHTIMESTABLOID@GMAIL.COM

Vol. 8 No. 3/MAY-JUNE, 2019

## Mississauga wants out of Peel Region

### BUT WHAT WILL IT COST THE CASH-POOR?



Mayor Bonnie Crombie says Mississauga would be better off if the rest of Peel – Brampton, Caledon – were separately run. That may be a fact for taxes and infrastructure. But what about the cash-poor people of Peel? What could happen to the folk on welfare, OW, ODSP? The shelters that house the homeless are almost all in Mississauga. The soup kitchens that feed the hungry are all in Brampton. The Region of Peel provides social services on behalf of the Ontario government. But the Doug Ford bunch doesn't have much time or money for the have-nots. A 1.5% raise in Ontario Works payments was stopped. Will Bonnie do the best job of frustrating more Ford takeaways?

BY BONNIE CROMBIE

There has been a great deal of discussion about Mississauga's position on regional government and our desire to become a separate, independent city. There have also been a lot of questions about what will happen if the province grants Mississauga's request.

In particular, the readers of Tough Times will be  
See Mississauga on page 4

## Hanging on to OHIP

Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) is forming a Health Coalition to oppose Doug Ford's privatization of Ontario's health care.

For information phone PPAG Chair  
Richard Antonio at  
647 237-5135,  
or email [chair.ppag@gmail.com](mailto:chair.ppag@gmail.com)

These are Mississauga's architectural gems, known popularly as the Marilyn Munro apartment buildings on the east side of Hurontario at Square One. Ever noticed how the two towers appear, rising in a western mist, in illustrations of Toronto's streetscapes? Toronto envies us! *(Photo supplied)*

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Social justice goes online

All parts of Peel are into trees this Spring

Taking aim at guns

Call for renaissance of the Bank of Canada

P2

P3

P5

P6

When you need a place to stay

Ford drags Brampton backward

Where to start for mental health

Did your vote count?

P7

P7

P8

P8 & 9

"Devastating" cut to Legal Aid

A shameful non-government

Will the cash poor be better off?

More than just a food bank

P11

P13

P14

P15

# CLIMATE CHANGE



## PEEL POVERTY ACTION GROUP

Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG) is open to every individual and organization in Peel Region that cares about what poverty does to people. It provides a safe place where people who are cash-poor and those who try to help them are encouraged to speak out – and Tough Times is part of that safe place. PPAG's mandate is to advocate for people in need and to educate the public about poverty issues. Membership is free. PPAG meets at 9:30 a.m. to noon, usually the second Thursday of every month (except July and August) alternately in Mississauga and Brampton.

### Meeting dates for 2019:

**Mississauga**, at the Newcomer Centre of Peel, 165 Dundas St. W., (at Confederation Parkway); May 9; Sept. 12; Nov 14.  
**Brampton**, place to be fixed: June 13; Oct. 10; Dec. 12  
Check PPAG's website for announcements.

[www.ppag.wordpress.com](http://www.ppag.wordpress.com)

## Advertising Rates

Tough Times distributes 10,000 copies, throughout Peel Region.

Target audience is people experiencing homelessness, using food banks and soup kitchens, people who are struggling, plus faith groups, social service agencies, trades unions, business people, and the general public.

### To advertise in Tough Times:

Email: [toughtimestabloid@gmail.com](mailto:toughtimestabloid@gmail.com)  
Phone: 905 826-5041  
Mail address: 4-287 Glidden Road  
Brampton, ON L6W 1H9, Canada

Advertising rates: (colour included)

**Business card:** \$105  
**1/16 page:** \$125  
**1/8 page:** \$190  
**1/4 page:** \$280  
**1/2 page:** \$460  
**3/4 page:** \$650  
**Full page:** \$810

A full page is approximately 10 inches wide by 12 inches deep = 120 square inches. E&OE

# Social justice goes online

BY CHRIS FOTOS

**T**ough Times is taking social justice to the web. You can find us online at [www.ToughTimesTabloid.ca](http://www.ToughTimesTabloid.ca)

And right on time, too. Public services are under attack from the Progressive Conservative Ford provincial government, and the Progressive Conservatives have a shot at forming government in the looming federal election.

We'll be using our online presence to hold politicians of all stripes to account, cover labour and social justice issues, and connect Peel Region's cash-poor residents with services they need. Staying informed is crucial in times like these.

The website was built by the newest addition to *Tough Times*' staff, myself, Christopher Fotos.

I found *Tough Times* tabloid in late 2018. The paper's commitment to Peel Region's cash-poor and homeless was surprising and refreshing — people don't often think of Peel as a place where poverty thrives, but homelessness and hunger are very real here. In January this year, I emailed Editor Edna Toth, and asked if I could help *Tough Times*' foray into the digital world.

Going forward, I'll be serving readers as *Tough Times*' online editor. If you'd like to provide online visual or written content, email [ToughTimesTabloid@gmail.com](mailto:ToughTimesTabloid@gmail.com)  
Tough Times continues print edi-



Chris Fotos at work  
(Photo by Kim Northcote)

tions six times a year, serving people who don't have computers or who prefer information by hand or who happen upon *Tough Times* in a coffee shop, or the library, at social service offices, in Peel Region buildings, shelters, soup kitchens, in food bank boxes, with their faith group, in their offices, cafeterias, most any place.

Look for it, read it, and visit it online.

*Chris Fotos is completing a B.A. at York University and is a songwriter, singer, band member.*

## ToughTimes

Tough Times is published  
six times a year

**Next issue: July-August, 2019**  
**Deadline for ads and editorial:**  
**June 1, 2019**

**Phone 905-826-5041**

Volunteer writers, reporters, artists, cartoonists, photographers, are welcome at *Tough Times*.

### Please email letters to:

[toughtimestabloid@gmail.com](mailto:toughtimestabloid@gmail.com)

### Produced by:

Peel Poverty Action Group (PPAG)

### Editor: Edna Toth

### Associate Editors:

Michelle Bilek, Rosemary Keenan  
Chris Fotos

### Graphic Designer: Patti Moran

### Contributors:

Huda Abbas, Richard Antonio, Navi Aujla, Kay Bajaj, Samina Bangash, Michelle Bilek, Laura Bilyea, Dr. Simon Black, Jaspal Brar, Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown, Taodhg Burns, Coun. George Carlson, Shaila Kibria Carter, Surabhi Das, Dr. Paula DeCoito, Nikki Clarke, Patricia Chrisjohn, Doris Cooper, Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie, Jack Fleming, Christopher Fotos, Moushumi Hakraborti, Linda Hochstetler, Jack Jackson, Jerry Jarosz, Sylvia Jones, MPP; Laura Kaminker, Rosemary Keenan, Shalini Konanur, Deb Kuipers, Stephen Lay, Alexandra MacGregor, Harinder Malhi, Julia Margetiak, Pat McGrail, Archana Medhekar, Brenda Murdoch, Varsha Naik, Norma Nicholson, Kimberley Northcote, Karen Ras, Christianne Reyna, Monica Riutort, Marina Rosas, Ruby Sahota, MP, Lea Salameh, Farina Salahuddin, Liisa Schofield, Chris Sensicle, Subash Sharma, Sara Singh, MPP; Bret Sheppard, Catherine. Sople, Coun. Ron Starr, Susan Stewart, staff members of the Region of Peel, Anna Syz, Chelsea Tao, Pauline Thornham, Rozeeta Torbram-Jarvis, Martin Tsvetanov, Edesiri Udoh, Kate Vinokurov, Suraiya Wajih, Jessica Wang, Grazyna Wiercinska, Emily Wiles, Coun. Charmaine Williams, John Wilson, Cheryl Yarek.

**Printed by:** Atlantic Web Printers

## Homeless: The Video

*Spaces and Places: Uncovering Homelessness in the Region of Peel* is a 15-minute video in which homeless people describe their experiences. A team from PPAG, including a once-homeless person, will show the video to a group on request. There is no charge. To book a showing contact [edna.toth@gmail.com](mailto:edna.toth@gmail.com) Allow about 45 minutes for the video and discussion.


The video was made by a team from York University, in cooperation with the Social Planning Council of Peel, financed by a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

## DO YOU KNOW...?

**A COMMUNITY LEADER / AN INCREDIBLE VOLUNTEER / AN AMAZING RESIDENT**


**NOMINATE THEM FOR**

**THE REMARKABLE CITIZEN AWARDS\***



7895 Tranmere Drive, #20, Mississauga, Ontario  
\*Deadline is June 7, 2019

**Deepak Anand**  
MPP/Député



**VISIT [DEEPAKANAND.CA](http://DEEPAKANAND.CA) & NOMINATE TODAY**





# All parts of Peel are into trees this spring

Mississauga, with a million trees on public land (250,000 of them on boulevards) is planting a tree of knowledge – educating Mississaugans about telling the City's Forestry department about

dead or dying or damaged trees. And what to do after a tree-ravaging storm.

On the brighter side, Mississauga hopes to plant one million trees by the year 2032. They're a third of the way

already.

Brampton already has an estimated 3.5 million trees on public and private land, and plants about 8,000 more every year. It offers to dedicate a tree

in memory of a person, celebration of a birth, or some other event. There's a fee.

Caledon takes the education route: a cartoon tells the tree story.

## NEED FOOD?

غذا درکار ہے؟  
 ਭੋਜਨ ਦੀ ਜ਼ਰੂਰਤ؟  
 需要食物吗？  
 Cần thực phẩm?  
 هل تحتاج إلى الطعام؟  
 ¿Necesita comida?



## Don't Go Hungry

If you don't have enough money for food and live in Mississauga, you can go to a neighbourhood food bank.

It doesn't matter about your age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, or immigration status. You will receive enough healthy food to feed your family for 7-10 days each month. There is no cost to visit a food bank.

Find your food bank at  
[www.themississaugafoodbank.org](http://www.themississaugafoodbank.org)  
 or phone 905.270.5589.





## Mississauga, cont. from page 1

asking what happens to the social and human services currently provided by the Region of Peel. I will do my best to answer these questions and provide greater information and context for Mississauga's position.

Our desire to separate from the Region of Peel is not new; in fact, former Mayor Hazel McCallion engaged in the "One City, One Voice" campaign in 2004 to seek independence.

The government of the day did not grant her wish, but the citizens of Mississauga were overwhelmingly in support of the idea, and with good reason.

Mississauga is Ontario's third largest City and the sixth in Canada.

We face many of the same challenges as other urban metropolises across the country.

The problem is, unlike many of the other bigger, and smaller cities in Ontario, we are not able to address them head on. Peel Region is an added layer of government that often slows down our process or creates a barrier to getting things done.

At the same time, Mississauga is over-contributing to the Region to the tune of \$85 million – money that could be better used for Mississauga's priorities.

Mississauga only has 50 per cent of the vote at Council. This means we have to ask Brampton and Caledon for permission and support before we are able to implement plans. Our priorities do not always align with theirs, and this in turn holds Mississauga back.

On transit, affordable housing, poverty reduction, community safety, growth and development, we must continually negotiate with the Region



for support.

As an example, Mississauga wants to revitalize and redevelop portions of the Malton community to build affordable housing and attract investment. The City began its planning work in 2015 and finished in 2017, but it took the Region almost two years to complete its part of the work.

Then, after more months of legal negotiations between the City and the Region, the City was finally able to move forward. The delay added almost three years.

This kept the affordable housing supply off the market and did not allow Malton to move forward as a community. There are countless other examples like this.

The bottom line is that we believe the Regional model is broken in Peel.



We do not dispute that the Regional staff provide excellent service and do good work.

Our concern is the duplication and waste, and lack of control inherent in the regional government model. Our proposal would see Mississauga take on the responsibilities of the Region. Just as Toronto delivers health and human services as a standalone city, so too would Mississauga. Toronto does not negotiate with other municipalities on poverty priorities, but is able to make decisions that are in the best interest of residents.

Under Mississauga's model, there would be no change in service levels. However there would be changes in the efficiency of how services are delivered.

You have my commitment that income and other supports currently provided by the Region would be unaffected and uninterrupted by the change. Having a single level of government deliver services, rather than two, is preferable.

Moreover, there would still be a requirement for staff to deliver the services the Region currently provides, but they would do so as part of the City of Mississauga.



For instance, the question about the future of Peel Police has been raised throughout this discussion.

Peel Police Services is governed by its own legislation and has an independent board of directors. Mississauga has no issue keeping Peel Police intact the way it currently operates with Mississauga and Brampton, providing funding based on our share of services.

On many matters, from economic development to transit, Mississauga cooperates across municipal borders, while retaining the ability to make our own decisions.

We know our community, our people and the challenges they face. Our Council and our professional staff at the City of Mississauga are in the best position to address these challenges; we simply need the power to do so.

We will continue to tackle poverty, build affordable housing for low and middle income earners, and build the necessary infrastructure from transit, to roads and bike lanes that our residents need to move across our City and throughout the wider GTA.

This is an issue of governance and the ability of Mississauga to control our own affairs and make decisions in the best interests of our residents. All we ask is fairness.

I encourage residents to visit [www.mississauga.ca](http://www.mississauga.ca) to learn more about our position and to make your voices heard at the provincial level. This is an important time in the future of Mississauga.



# Taking aim at guns



**B**rampton gals are getting behind the guns.

First off is Charmaine Williams, councillor for Wards 7 and 8 in Brampton. She triggered her career on council in 2018 with an appeal for a gun amnesty, loaded with a suggestion to Council that Brampton offer \$100 to residents who no longer use their guns but lack an incentive to get rid of them.

Seeking signatures for a petition in support of the \$100 motivator, she reported that when Toronto held a gun amnesty in 1999, about 300 guns were handed in. A year later, with a \$50 per gun incentive, 2,000 guns came in.

Next up is Rowena Santos, Regional councillor for Brampton Wards 1 and 5. Santos turned thumbs down on the \$100 shot, taking other councillors with her.

She issued a statement, which includes these remarks:

“The residents of our city put their trust in us. They voted for new councillors who will move our city forward through team work and make responsible, educated, informed decisions based on evidence.

“Our action to tackle gun violence should be consistent with those expectations. Gun violence is a serious and systemic issue that stems from root causes such as gangs, poverty, social exclusion, mental health, and more. Studies support that substantive and successful strategies to reduce gun violence require proper research, local data, expertise, and collaboration at all

levels of government.

“We must not support a back-of-a-napkin motion to address serious issues such as gun violence in our City. It is irresponsible and misleading to support a notion that throwing randomly-determined dollars towards a problem as serious as gun violence, will result in any meaningful long-term impact.”

“Within our local jurisdiction we must communicate with, outreach to, and invest in our youth to provide opportunities that engage and encourage them to make a positive contribution in our community.”

Enter Ruby Sahota, MP for Brampton North, well-armed with argument. She pot-shots at Opposition Conservatives who have turned down lifetime background checks on applications for renewals of firearms licences, turned down “proper” record-keeping for gun sales, and oppose “political intervention in firearms classification.”

Sahota describes her Liberal government’s proposed laws as “commonsense firearms legislation that prioritizes public safety and effective police work, while treating law-abiding firearms owners in a fair and reasonable manner.”

She continues: “At time of increasing gun violence, we Liberals are looking to support provinces, municipalities and local law enforcement in their efforts to disrupt gangs, prosecute offenders, prevent young people from being drawn into gangs in the first place and to help them exit that destructive lifestyle.”

“For years, my constituents have been telling me how the threat of gun and gang violence has made them feel unsafe in their neighbourhoods. I am proud to support a government that will continue to fight for the solutions my constituents need.”

**"RECORD SET: Shootings up 13 per cent in Brampton..."**

BRAMPTON GUARDIAN October 7, 2018

**IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION!**

City Councillor Charmaine Williams has moved a motion to get guns off the streets of Brampton through a gun amnesty & gun buy back program. Tell city council to support her plan by signing the petition at:

**[www.NoGunsKnowPeace.com](http://www.NoGunsKnowPeace.com)**



**[www.NoGunsKnowPeace.com](http://www.NoGunsKnowPeace.com)**

Newspaper-style advertisement used by Charmaine Williams in seeking support for her campaign to offer \$100 cash for guns turned in by Brampton citizens. There's no \$100 offered now, but if you've got a gun to get rid of, phone Peel Police at 905 453-3311 and they will arrange to collect it. Don't take it to a police station.



# Call for renaissance of the Bank of Canada

We civil society organizations who work for public welfare in Canada, depending heavily on dedicated volunteers, are constantly frustrated in our efforts to obtain government funding to meet urgent human and environmental needs. We are repeatedly informed that there is never enough money available, and that we must endure austerity in order that growing public debts can be overcome. We are told that public funds—essential for infrastructure repair, for health and medical care, for education, for poverty reduction, for social justice, and for environmental protection—not only cannot be increased despite urgent unmet needs, but must be cut, and public assets for providing public services, must be privatized.

We are deeply concerned about government deficits and debt, and also about the heavy personal debts borne by Canadian citizens. Indeed we believe that governmental and personal debt should be taken far more seriously, and dealt with by far more radical means than the usual austerity programs involving cuts to social programs and privatization. Such measures have already been experienced as profoundly unjust. They shift debt burdens to individual Canadian citizens, especially to the most needy, bankrupting and impoverishing many.

Meanwhile, we see that wealthy individuals and corporations receive tax cuts they do not need, and that they often use tax havens to escape such taxes as they do owe. Lowering taxes for the rich is regularly justified by the argument that they invest their savings to create employment, but we see little evidence to support this claim. We see further that our federal government makes billions available for controversial warfare, for expensive, inappropriate new weapon systems, and for unnecessary new prisons, while poverty and environmental damage continue to increase. A just tax system, wisely spent, could go a long way toward promoting the human and environmental welfare to which we are committed. But changes in our tax system are not enough to deal adequately with our needs, including our debt problems.

Crucial to our governmental debt problems is the fact that our governments at all levels borrow from

private banks and from other private money-lenders, and pay interest on these debts. Each year governments across Canada presently pay some \$60 billion in interest on their debts, and as these debts increase, with

ingly catered to the private commercial banks, this practice greatly declined. Governments at all levels throughout Canada increasingly had to resort to borrowing from the private banks and other private money-lenders, including



interest rates probably rising, this enormous annual burden for taxpayers will increase. *But this interest expense is not necessary.*

Through our Bank of Canada, which has been publicly owned since 1938, the federal government has the power to borrow money in huge quantities essentially interest-free, and to make such funds available not only for its own use, but also for provincial and municipal expenditures. Such borrowing helped Canada to get out of the Great Depression, and to finance its participation in World War II. Continuance of this practice until 1974 played a key role in creating Canada's post-war prosperity and in making possible its cherished social programs.

As federal governments, which control the Bank of Canada, increas-

foreign sources. Moreover, the Bank of Canada in the late 1970s began raising interest rates as its primary tool for fighting inflation, driving the economy into recession in the early 1980s and again in the early 1990s. These changes from the original mandate of the Bank of Canada, combined with tax reductions for the wealthy, rapidly increased the debts of governments at all levels, justifying major cuts to social programs. Following some recent federal government economic stimulus following the 2008 global financial meltdown, the austerity agenda is bringing ever more devastating cuts to our valued public services.

In line with policies pursued through the Bank of Canada between 1938 and 1974, our federal government could revive the powers

of the Bank of Canada to replace gradually interest-bearing debt carried by governments at all levels with interest-free debt, and could make available interest-free loans for new projects. This change in monetary policy, combined with changes in tax policy, would make available each year tens of billions of dollars urgently needed for actions, which can only be taken by governments, to protect our environment from such dire threats as climate change, to rebuild and to improve our public infrastructure, and to strengthen social programs meeting human needs—notably medical care. Through such interest-free loans for infrastructure, for example, our governments, instead of paying for interest that could double or triple their investment expenses, could be paying only for the principal, thus freeing tax income for other programs. Moreover, government-funded construction would create jobs, stimulate additional economic activity, and significantly increase tax receipts.

Those who oppose the revival of this monetary policy invariably charge that it would be inflationary, even though it was managed in the past without significant inflation. As the government through the Bank of Canada creates growing quantities of our money supply, the power of private banks to create money needs to be restrained, as was possible until 1991, when the reserve requirement for the private banks was surreptitiously removed from the Bank Act. This provision to the Bank Act needs to be restored to prevent inflation, as can readily be done.

Therefore, we Canadian civil society organizations, who work for public welfare, call on our federal government to revive the powers of the Bank of Canada to provide funding to all levels of government in Canada, largely with interest-free loans, as was done between 1938 and 1974 with very low inflation, enabling our nation to break out of the Great Depression, to shoulder extraordinary responsibilities during World War II, and to prosper while building our infrastructure and highly valued social programs during some thirty post-war years. We Canadians now urgently need a renaissance of these powers of our Bank of Canada

**This article appears on the website of COMER, Committee of Monetary and Economic Reform. It calls on the federal government to restore the Bank of Canada to its previous role as a prime lender to Canadian governments, thus saving huge sums in interest payments. You are invited to ENDORSE THE CALL by publicizing the idea in more media.**

**Find out more at [comer.org](http://comer.org)**

## WHEN YOU NEED A PLACE TO STAY – URGENTLY THE SALVATION ARMY CAN HELP

Homelessness can happen to anyone.

Sudden loss of employment, physical injury, are among the many factors that can result in an individual losing a home.

In Ontario alone, an estimated 12,000 people experience homelessness on any given night. But there is hope...and that is where The Salvation Army steps in.

"We want to reach out to those who may be struggling before they reach the point of homelessness," says Fran Kane, Executive Director of Peel Shelter and Housing Services. "The Salvation Army provides many services that can support individuals vulnerable to homelessness."

The Salvation Army operates five shelters in the Region of Peel: in Brampton – Queen Street Youth Shelter and Wilkinson Road Shelter for men; in Mississauga – the Cawthra Road Shelter, Honeychurch Family Life Resource Centre, and Peel Family Shelter.

**QUEEN STREET YOUTH:** Brampton Queen Street Youth, is the first youth shelter in the city, with 40 beds available for youth ages 16 to 24. Clients get a place to stay, three meals a day, and if they need it, housing search assistance, financial help, life-skills development and employment training are available. . A dentist and doctor visit once a week.

Additional programs include housing search assistance, financial help, as well as life-skills development and employment training. For more information, phone **905-791-2334**.

**CAWTHRA ROAD SHELTER:** With over 100 beds, The Salvation Army's Cawthra Road Shelter provides emergency housing including meals to single men and women over 25. The shelter focuses on housing homeless individuals as quickly as possible and providing supportive services after they have been housed. Phone **905-281-1272**.

**HONEYCHURCH FAMILY LIFE RESOURCE CENTRE:** The Salvation Army's Honeychurch Family Life Resource Centre provides a safe haven for women and children fleeing violence, offering temporary accommodation for up to 18 families.

Services include crisis counselling, legal advice, support groups and practical assistance. Personal safety is a priority.

If you or someone you know is facing physical, emotional, psychological, or verbal abuse, contact the Honeychurch Family Life Resource Centre at **905-451-4115**.

**PEEL FAMILY SHELTER:** Located in Mississauga, the Peel Family Shelter is a 160-bed emergency shelter for homeless families. Food, clothing, and psychosocial support are available to residents every day. The shelter focuses on finding housing for families and helping them transition smoothly to independent living. For more information on the Peel Family Shelter, phone **905-272-7061**.

**WILKINSON ROAD SHELTER:** The Salvation Army's Wilkinson Road Shelter in Brampton provides temporary emergency housing for men 16 and older who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. The shelter has 101 beds and provides services such as pastoral care, mental health and addiction support, life skills training, and more. Phone **905-452-1335**.

**Whatever the reasons that bring an individual to our shelters, The Salvation Army is committed to walking alongside them, to support them in their journey.**

## Ford drags Brampton backward says NDP

As Tough Times went to press, the Ontario budget was presented at Queen's Park.

Brampton's three New Democrat MPPs promptly denounced it.

Official Opposition Deputy Leader Sara Singh (Brampton Centre), Kevin Yarde (Brampton North) and Gurratan

Singh (Brampton East) said the budget adds insult to injury for Brampton families.

### Here's what they said:

The budget cuts \$1 billion from the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services;

It underfunds health care below the rate of inflation, which means more hallway medicine and no new hospital;

No new university campus for Brampton;

"Brampton is a growing city and families need their services to grow with it," said Singh. "Rather than make investments in our health and education, Doug Ford is taking things away from Brampton families.

"We need a new hospital, and we need to expand Peel Memorial. We need a university campus so our young people can get the education they deserve right here in Brampton. Ford's budget not only ignored those needs entirely but made the kind of cuts that will hurt families in our community."

In October, New Democrats put forward a motion calling on the Conservatives to fund a new Brampton hospital and expand Peel Memorial Centre in the spring budget. The Ford Conservatives voted it down.

"Brampton families continue to face excruciating waits in crowded emergency rooms and Ford's health care cuts will make a dire situation so much worse," said Yarde. "Without funding that keeps pace with inflation our hospitals will continue to be squeezed for resources. We need to expand services in Brampton, but Ford is forcing us to make do with even less. This attack on Brampton is wrong, and it has to stop."

Yarde—the NDP's Community Safety critic—noted that the budget lacked funding to help Brampton combat gun violence and improve community safety.

Gurratan Singh said that Doug Ford stole the future from Brampton students by cancelling funding for a new college campus.

"It just got even more difficult to access post secondary education if you live in Brampton," he said. "Ford is cutting even more from student assistance and threatening to withhold as much as 60 per cent of an institution's funding if they don't do as Doug Ford says."

## WE'RE ON THE MOVE

### *New home for Labour and Community Services*

BY JERRY JAROSZ

Labour Community Services of Peel (LCSP), a non-profit offering free social services in Peel, has moved from its old office in Mississauga to Brampton, and invites everyone to its Open House at 10 Gillingham Dr. #213, on Thursday, June 6, from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Check it out in the Service Canada plaza, at the corner of Bovaird Dr. and Main St.

LCSP's in-house help centre provides information on Employment Insurance, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB), Canada pension, human rights and employment rights, and more.

It tries to settle difficulties through mediation and representation, and helps with intervention or appeals on behalf of workers.

Its employees and volunteers conduct Know Your Rights at Work (KYR@W) training for groups, helping workers understand their employment rights, human rights and health and safety needs.

With funding mostly from The United Way Greater Toronto, part of its mandate is to raise awareness and support for the United Way regarding labour and social issues.

We are proud of the thousands of dollars we have returned to working people and their families.





## Finding the way to mental health for children and youth

BY ALEXANDRA MACGREGOR  
AND JULIA MARGETIAK

In Peel Region, finding mental health services for children and youth up to age 24 just got a whole lot easier.

*WhereToStart.ca: Access to Mental Health Services for Children and Youth* is a free and confidential service that connects young people to a range of high quality mental health programs and services in our community.

Navigating the child and youth mental health system can be difficult and exhausting. Young people and their families often don't know where to seek help, and frequently find themselves repeating their story many times before connecting with the right service or program.

*WhereToStart.ca* seeks to make things easier for children and youth who need mental health support by doing most of the heavy lifting: all you have to do is phone for help.

When you phone *WhereToStart.ca* at 905 451-4655, a specialist will listen

to your story, ask questions and help you find the right program or service for your unique needs. They will also connect you to walk-in counselling and/or crisis mental health services if you need them.

Youth over the age of 12 can contact *WhereToStart.ca* on their own, and parents/guardians of young people under the age of 16 can contact *WhereToStart.ca* on their behalf. *WhereToStart.ca* also accepts referrals from physicians and community service providers.

Mental health affects all of us, including children and youth.

According to the provincial advocacy organization Children's Mental Health Ontario, as many as one in five children and youth in Ontario will experience some form of mental health challenge, and five out of six of these young people will not receive the treatment they need.

It is more important now than ever before that children and youth know how to find help.

## Did your vote count ... DOES IT MATTER?

BY PAT MCGRAIL

Doug Ford's Ontario government has distressed many with cuts to education, social assistance and minimum wage. A basic income pilot project has been eliminated and universal healthcare is under attack.

We are told that Ontario can no longer afford programs that lift people out of poverty. And as climate change threatens, Ontario is paying out millions to cancel existing environmental programs and oppose federal government initiatives.

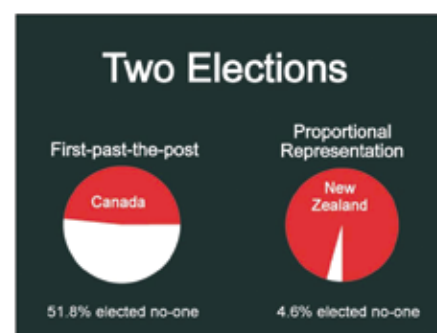
The wealthy and multinationals get tax relief while the rest of us are being told to pull up our boots and fend for ourselves.

So how is it possible that a government opposed by a sizable majority of voters apparently has *carte blanche* to do whatever it wants?

The root of our problem is a wonky electoral system which effectively disenfranchises half the population entitled to representation and throws our constitutional machinery out of gear.

Let's take any riding which has four candidates standing for election as MPP. Under our current First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system, whoever gets the most votes becomes the MPP. If Candidate A gets 40% of the vote and the remaining three candidates get the other 60% between them, 60% of the voters have nobody to represent their views.

Let's assume that this riding is a "safe" riding.



There are many such ridings in Canada – likely the majority – where everyone knows they will not be elected even before the election is open. Assume most voters believe that their vote will not count and it doesn't matter if they vote. This is probably right.

There are also a few ridings where a small shift in population could change the result, as in Peel Region. This shift usually determines which party forms the government. But even in such ridings, most voters will not vote to represent their views. The rest of the votes fall off the table and are not counted.

In 2018, the PCs received 41% of the million votes or 41% of the votes cast.

But the 76 PC MPPs who were elected to the government received less than 31% of the vote. Yet the PCs received 61% of the seats, 100% of the power.

Supporters of other parties found their votes had much less weight. Almost 90% of the votes cast by Liberal and Green Party supporters went to no-one – as did 57% of NDP votes. The Liberals received 20% of the popular vote but lost 10% of the seats. Overall, 52% of votes cast went to no-one. Electoral reform is NOT a partisan issue; it is a voter representation issue!

Canada's so-called "majority" government is frequently elected by a small proportion of the vote.

**Knights Table**  
Helping To Alleviate Hunger in Peel Region

Contact:  
gala@knightstable.org  
905-454-8725  
www.knightstable.org



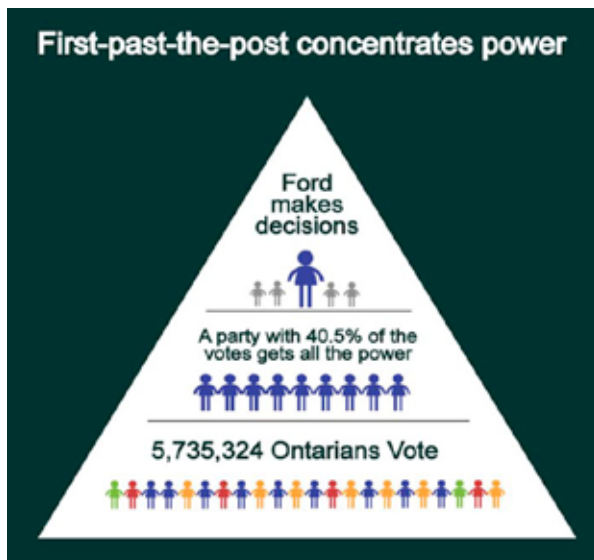
**7<sup>th</sup> Annual**  
**"Feeding Our Future" Fundraising Gala**  
*Dinner, Entertainment and Silent Auction*  
Pearson Convention Centre  
2638 Steeles Ave. E., Brampton, ON L6T 4L7  
Friday, June 14, 2019 • Cocktails 6pm • Dinner 7pm

Coun  
inco  
grow

Alm  
eve  
vo  
cou



# nt in last year's Ontario election?



population, at all levels of government. Voters in the only other western countries still using FPTP – the US and UK – face similar democratic deficits.

We can do better. More than 80 democratic countries use a modern voting system resulting in “proportional representation” or “PR”. This simply means that if a party gets 40% of the vote, it gets 40% of the seats.

PR countries, on the whole, are more responsive to the priorities and preferences of the broader majority. Up to 90% of votes ‘count’ in countries like Norway, Germany, Switzerland, New Zealand and many others.

In Canada, we have become accustomed to politicians making grand-sounding election promises but failing to deliver. So, we no longer vote or else vote “strategically” for a party we do not like to keep out a party we like even less.

Most PR countries have not only maintained but expanded their social safety net, resulting in higher scores on the United Nations Index of Human Development, factoring in health, education and standard of living indicators. The top eight countries in the World Happiness Index all use PR. Consensual democracies have also acted more quickly and better in protecting the environment.

PR governments are usually stable, “true” majority coalitions. They engage in long-term planning

Will your vote in Ontario help influence policy?



and seldom experience policy lurch – reversing the policies of the last government post-election. They have less debt and better economic results with nine out of 10 of the top economic performers in the OECD using PR.

Other notable PR benefits include lower income inequality and higher voter turnout. Legislatures more closely reflect the population with greater female and minority representation.

In the last federal election, two-thirds of voters supported parties that promised electoral reform. The subsequent betrayal by the Liberal government proved yet again that politicians do not give up power willingly. If citizens want to regain control over their governance, they must be willing to demand it loudly.

The stakes are high – for ourselves and our children. No matter what issue moves us – housing, healthcare, student debt, disability or immigration support, climate change – our government must be working for us. We need proportional representation now.

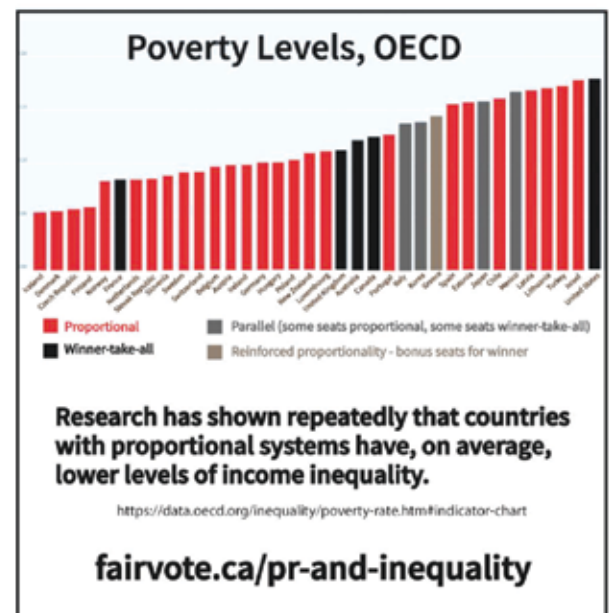
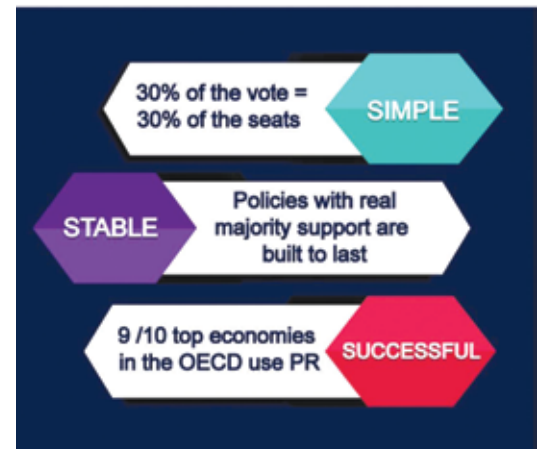
Fair Vote Canada is a multi-partisan citizens movement, organized solely to advocate for proportional representation. It is not affiliated with any political party and relies on volunteers across the country. To learn more, sign a Declaration of Voters Rights, donate or volunteer. Visit [www.fairvote.com](http://www.fairvote.com)

Peel Region Action Group is campaigning locally and welcomes any opportunity to speak to groups, display literature or accompany other citizens in visits to MPs and MPPs. Please contact us at [fairvotepeel@gmail.com](mailto:fairvotepeel@gmail.com)

*Pat McGrail is a Certified Public Accountant, now retired. She is the volunteer leader of Peel Region Action Team of Fair Vote Canada. A Brampton resident, she also volunteers with the Council of Canadians and Sierra Club Peel.*

**Make Every Vote Count!**  
[www.fairvote.ca/declaration](http://www.fairvote.ca/declaration)

**Proportional representation:  
Simple, Stable, Successful**



**“We’re going to stand up  
for the 2.3 million  
Ontarians that voted for  
a more efficient government.”**

**- Doug Ford, Sept 14/2018**



**2,307,343  
PC voters**



**5,695,416  
Voters in Ontario**



**13,448,494  
Population of Ontario**

**Countries with proportional representation have lower  
income inequality, healthier citizens, higher economic  
growth and better environmental protection.**

**Here’s how they do it**





# When learning is a challenge

## ToughTimes

BY LAURA BILYEA, Librarian  
Central Library, Mississauga

Do you remember sitting helplessly in school while the other students around you read their books, or whizzed through the math questions, or eagerly wrote the answers for the spelling test? And you sat, bewildered and a little scared, because you just didn't get it, couldn't do it, didn't understand—yet.

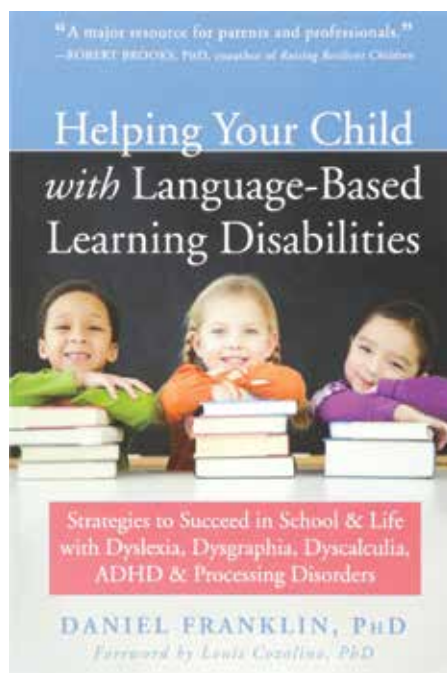
We all still get those moments (or is that just me?) but for many children, this is every day, every class. Learning challenges are a very real obstacle for many young students. How can we—as parents, friends, teachers, and caregivers—help to clear a path through the confusion for them?

We can learn more about the issues they face. Here are some books from the Mississauga Library to teach us about learning challenges:

***Helping your child with language-based learning disabilities: strategies to succeed in school and life with dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia, ADHD, and processing disorders***  
2018.

Franklin, Daniel,  
616. 85889 FRA

As a parent, it hurts to see your child struggle. But the good news is that there are proven-effective strategies you can learn to help your child be their best. In this book,

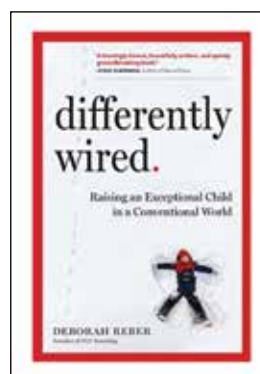


you'll discover why it's so important to assess your child accurately, find new perspectives based on the most current studies, and discover tips and strategies for navigating school, home life, and your child's future. Every child is unique—and every child learns in his or her own way. Using the tools provided in this book, children can hone the skills needed to do better in school, gain self-confidence and self-esteem, and cultivate a positive mindset.

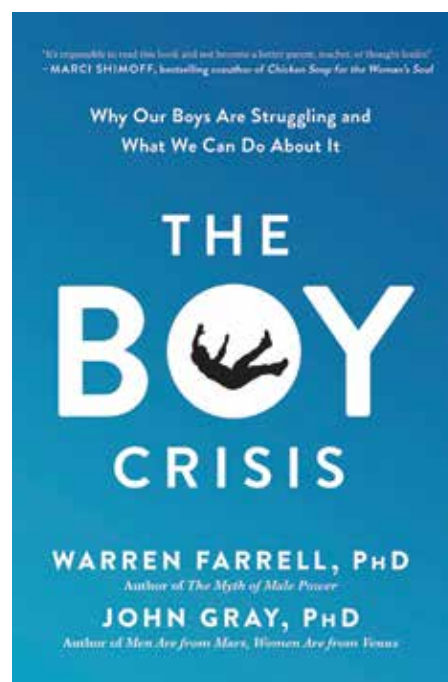
***Differently wired: raising an exceptional child in a conventional world***  
2018

Reber, Deborah,  
649. 1528 REB

They're the “differently wired” kids: the one in five children with ADHD, dyslexia, Asperger's, giftedness, anxiety,



sensory processing disorder, and other neurodifferences. For the parents who love them, the challenges are just as hard—struggling to find the right school, the right therapist, the right parenting group while feeling isolated and harboring endless internal doubts about what's normal, what's not, and how to handle it all. Reber provides a been-there, done-that book that helps others discover how to stay open, pay attention, and become an exceptional parent to your exceptional child.



***The boy crisis: why our boys are struggling and what we can do about it***  
2018

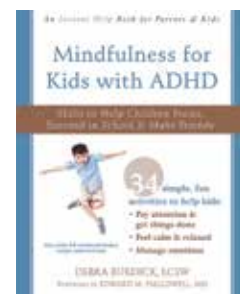
Farrell, Warren,  
155. 432 FAR

Worldwide, boys are 50 percent less likely than girls to meet basic proficiency in reading, math, and science. ADHD is on the rise. Many bright boys are experiencing a “purpose void,” feeling alienated, withdrawn, and addicted to immediate gratification. This book provides a comprehensive blueprint for what parents, teachers, and policymakers can do to help our sons become happier, healthier men, and fathers and leaders worthy of our respect.

***Mindfulness for kids with ADHD: skills to help children focus, succeed in school & make friends***

2018

Burdick, Debra E.,  
618. 92858 BUR



Mindfulness for kids with ADHD offers fun and accessible mindfulness exercises to help your child successfully navigate all areas

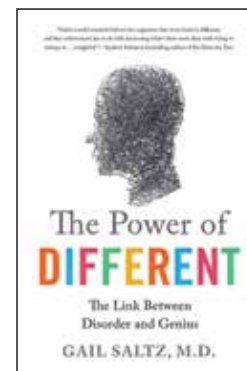
of life. The activities in this easy-to-use workbook will help your child develop self-awareness and self-reflection—two skills that kids with ADHD often need extra help with. If you're looking for real tools to help your child with ADHD thrive, this workbook can help.

There is always room for hope and broader thinking. There are specialists who argue that genius and creativity are linked to “neurodifferences”. Here is a suggested book on this perspective.

***The power of different: the link between disorder and genius***

2017

Saltz, Gail,  
305. 9084 SAL



Saltz shows how the very conditions that cause people to experience difficulty at school, in social situations, at home, or at work, are inextricably bound to

creative, disciplinary, artistic, empathetic, and cognitive abilities. Readers will find engaging scientific research and stories from historical geniuses and everyday individuals who have not only made the most of their conditions, but who have flourished because of them.

*How can we help? We can learn. We can ask the hard questions of the teachers, the school administration, and the doctors. We can band together with other parents. We can accept the challenge head-on. Use your knowledge. Use your library.*

## Proudly representing Peel's Public Elementary Teachers

***Defending quality public education – for our students & our communities***



Peel Elementary  
Teachers' Local

etfopeel.com  
@ETFOPeel  
@peeletfo



# “Devastating” cut to Legal Aid

**BY JACK FLEMING**

I am writing in response to Tough Times’ request for comment on the cut to Legal Aid Ontario (LAO) funding, announced in the Ontario budget. LAO’s budget has been cut by \$133m in the current fiscal year -- a 30% cut in funding.

As well, the reduction in annual funding will continue and will be an annual \$164m cut two years from now.

This is a devastating blow to persons with low income at the point in their lives when they most desperately need help: at the time that they are facing eviction, deportation, loss of income or other legal problems. Now, for many of them, at that low point there will be no one there to help them.

At this point, we do not know specifically how this will affect community legal clinics in general or legal clinics in Peel specifically. LAO will have to figure out a response quickly as the budget cut affects the current fiscal year. However, at this point, we do not know how LAO will respond and to what extent the cuts will affect legal clinics.

We had understood that Doug Ford had committed to no loss of front line services for Ontarians, and had committed to no job losses for those delivering front line services.

Every one working in a community legal clinic delivers front line services.

We are all small non-profit organizations directly helping people.

Community legal clinics never run a deficit and have decades of experience scraping by on funding that cannot possibly meet the demand for service.

We have found all of the efficiencies that can be found and we have embraced every opportunity for modernization.

A funding reduction of this size will mean loss of services for low income Ontarians. No “efficiencies” or “modernization” can make up for a 30% cut in funding.

*Jack Fleming is a lawyer and executive director of North Peel and Dufferin Community Legal Services in Brampton.  
[www.NorthPeelDufferinJustice.ca](http://www.NorthPeelDufferinJustice.ca)*







## CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE

# Could we prohibit unhealthy foods?

BY TAODHG BURNS

In the world of 2019 when the food system is increasingly dominated by big food corporations, our choices of what to eat can be very limited, especially for those who cannot afford the more expensive natural, organic less-processed, more nutritious products.

We are living in times of unprecedented inequality, including food inequality. It's no surprise that the rich live longer than the poor, who more and more have to rely on food banks, even in developed countries like Canada.

"Eat Well, Live Well" as the new 2019 Canada Food Guide recommends means different things for different people.

As recently reported by the media, the rich are faking "street" experiences while eating under the Gardiner Expressway in Toronto, although in the safety of "crystal" bubbles.

Others try to follow the latest eating fashions promoted by their idols in entertainment, sport and social media, while growing numbers of others are just struggling to put any food on the table at all, relying on highly-processed products from food banks, supermarkets, and health food stores catering to the needs of this different demographic.

The Canada Food Guide puts the burden for better food choices on individuals.

Since more people are obese or diabetic, the approach of food labelling can't be working; why?

- 1) people have to read and understand the labels
- 2) they have to interpret the labels' often technical information.

There are no quick or easy fixes to a complex problem like nutrition. Multiple factors play a role, from individual choice, family culture and peer pressure, to economic class.

Affecting many individuals are isolation, disability, poverty.

A root problem for many in food choices is the domination of corporate voices.

Here's some advice for those at the top: don't just preach or label. Help people with timely interventions, but most important of all, prevent food problems before they start by limiting, to the point of prohibiting, the sale and marketing of unhealthy foods.

## Privatization – overspent and undelivered

BY RICHARD ANTONIO

The Ontario government wants to privatize a growing number of publicly owned assets and services – from the sale of beer and wine, marijuana distribution, to health care services.

We believe that most Ontario residents disagree – especially when they understand the facts about privatization and the benefits of publicly delivered services.

Growing evidence shows that when public services are publicly owned and publicly delivered, they are better, safer, more affordable, more accountable.

What does privatization mean?

Simply stated, it means

highways, medical labs and utilities are being used to generate profits instead of serving our communities. If there is no profit the service is cut. It means citizens' hard-earned money is spent on paying businesses and corporations cost-plus-profit. For example, the city of Hamilton saved millions after taking its water treatment service out of the hands of private contractors.

Hired contractors may promise to create new jobs and infrastructure investments. But private companies are motivated by their own bottom lines, not by public needs and may cut corners.

Private contracts are above and beyond public scrutiny and the public have no way of knowing what's being handed over or committed to when a government signs a contract with a private company.

Private companies cannot be fired if the work does not measure up. For example, in her 2016 report, Ontario's Auditor General highlighted a number of problems with private contractors, including one that installed a bridge truss upside down.

Another example is Ontario's first-ever private cancer treatment facility. Terms of the contract, financed by public money, were considered to be a "commercial secret" and key details were missing.

A special audit by the provincial

Auditor General revealed the for-profit clinic had been charging the government \$500 more per procedure than publicly-operated clinics did, and this for-profit centre had not reduced patient wait lists after more than a year.

To win contracts, private companies are motivated to over-promise. That's why so many public-private partnerships sound great on paper but disappoint in reality. Private contractors

say what they need to say to win a contract and then do what they need to do to make a profit.

The Auditor General has said that using private money to pay for hospitals and transit is "high-risk," "costly," and "lacks

transparency"

In her 2016 report on government spending, Ontario's Auditor General highlighted some of the ways that private companies drive up expenses by mismanaging budgets and charging extra fees.

In one project alone, errors made by the consultant caused a project to be over-budget by 35%, or \$13.6 million, a cost that Metrolinx (a government agency) had to pay as a result of the design not including all final requirements.

In a sample of six projects whose total initial construction costs were over \$178 million, \$22.5 million more had to be spent just because of the design consultants' errors and omissions.

The amount that private contractors overcharged the provincial government on 74 out-sourced projects according to a 2014 report by Ontario's Auditor General was \$8 billion.

It's time for all Ontarians to demand the provincial government practice "HAND'S OFF" our public services.

Peel Poverty Action Group calls on the Ontario Government to KEEP PUBLIC SERVICES PUBLIC.

*Excerpts from a speech by Richard Antonio, chair of Peel Poverty Action Group. He can be contacted at chair.ppag@gmail.com*

*Growing evidence shows that when public services are publicly owned and publicly delivered, they are better, safer, more affordable, more accountable.*



## LABOUR SPEAKS ITS MIND

# A shameful non-Government



**JASPAL  
BRAR**

**W**e have an Ontario Government under Doug Ford's leadership that ran on the platform of "For the People."

What's shameful is the fact the Doug Ford's government seems to be here only for the rich and certainly not the majority of people who, as in Peel, are working people, some living on the poverty line.

One such example of shame is scrapping Bill 148, updating the Employment Standards Act. Bill 148 didn't just happen overnight.

It was through consultations with labour groups that it finally passed, with gains to help working-class people, such as common sense changes – no requirements for a doctor's note if you are sick for up to 10 days in a year. This made absolute sense because we are all human and not immune to getting sick with colds and flu. Good rest and over-the-counter medication helps the majority of people recover. The Liberal government approved Bill 148. But Ford's Conservatives reversed it, so now employers can force their employees to bring in a doctor's note.

This will not only enable the cold or flu symptoms to be passed on to other people but most doctors will charge the patient for the note and bill our healthcare system.

Then comes Bill 66 – the latest law passed by the Ford government which pays less to workers when it comes to overtime. This is yet another attack on workers who work extra hours and are deprived of being paid a fair income. Time-and-a-half pay is usually mandatory when workers work more than 44 hours a week unless an overtime averaging agreement is in place.

Before Bill 66, if an employee worked 30 hours in Week One, 30 hours in Week Two, 60 hours in Week Three and 60 hours in Week Four, he/she would get 32 hours of overtime pay (because in Weeks Three and Four, she/he worked in excess of 44 hours/week, overtime averaging was spread over two weeks).

Under the new law, the same worker would have the hours averaged over a month instead of two weeks, resulting in overtime pay of just four hours.

People work overtime to get additional pay; but this Bill passed by the Ford government puts less money into the workers' pockets and more into the employers' pockets.

Freezing minimum wages at \$14 an hour did nothing to help those living on or below the poverty lines.

Many big corporations rake in profits, and this just helps them get richer to the detriment of workers. These corporations can afford to pay their workers a livable wage without going bankrupt; it just means they will not be making much higher profits.

Last year we saw teachers at York

University go on strike to protect the high quality of education. The teachers were in a legal position to strike and wanted to negotiate with York University.

It was bad enough for the teachers to be on the picket lines for 21 weeks because York University prolonged the strike, knowing they had Ford's government on their side.

The government passed "Back to Work" legislation without any consultations with the teachers union or even any attempts to get the employer back to the bargaining table.

This doesn't help the process of bargaining because from now on, there is no incentive for the employer to negotiate.

On April 4, 2019 a mass walkout by students across the province protested the changes to education.

These changes by the Ford government will increase class sizes, require students to take more online courses, change the province's autism program amongst other things, and will also result in reducing the numbers of school

teachers and the quality of education.

As *Tough Times* went to press, Bill 74 was being rammed through the Legislature, paving the way for privatization of health care. A section of the Bill removes references to keeping hospital and other health services public and not-for-profit.

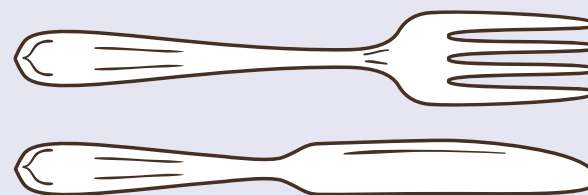
In another section, the health minister is given power to direct a hospital, long-term care home, etc., to utilize a private company for a specific service.

The people of Ontario deserve to get fair and livable wages for their hard work.

Our children – the future of Ontario – are not getting the best education they deserve and need. Nor are any of us sure of the healthcare we must have.

It is time for the Ford government to live up to its election promises, and be there for all the people.

*Jaspal Brar is president of Unifor Local 1285.*



## Seniors' Lunch Bunch

FOOD AND FRIENDS: A DELICIOUS COMBINATION

**V**ON Peel hosts weekly seniors-only lunch clubs, named Senior's Lunch Bunch and held in various locations across Mississauga. Local seniors mix and mingle while eating a freshly prepared nutritious meal.

For more than 10 years VON Peel, a Canadian non-profit organization, has organized Senior's Lunch Bunch, with the help of volunteers.

Senior's Lunch Bunch is held on Mondays in the Erin Mills-Collegeway area, Wednesdays in Clarkson and Meadowvale, Thursdays in Streetsville, and Fridays in the Cawthra and

Rathburn area. Transportation is available for the Monday and Wednesday lunches.

Meals begin at noon with soup or salad, followed by a main entrée (spaghetti and meatballs, anyone?) and finishes with dessert, coffee and tea.

Want to join a lunch group? Phone 905 821-3254.

Phone the same number if you are interested in volunteering to help at lunches or other programs such as Meals on Wheels, Volunteer Visiting or S.M.A.R.T Exercise.

**Deb Kuipers, Care Coordinator**  
VON Canada, Peel

### LABOUR COMMUNITY SERVICES OF PEEL

OFFERING FREE SUPPORT WITH UNJUSTIFIED DISMISSAL, HUMAN RIGHTS and DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS @ WORK (KYR) Workshops and Training

**WE MOVED! Come by and visit us. Open House is on JUNE 6TH 3-7pm**



@LCSPeel



Labour Community Services of Peel

**10 Gillingham Dr. Unit 213  
Brampton, ON. L6X 5A5  
Tel.: 905.696.7444  
www.lcspeel.ca**

## IF MISSISSAUGA SEPARATES

# Will the cash-poor be better off?

The Region of Peel could split up. Mississauga Council is examining the possibilities of separating from the Region, and having its own tax base and providing its own services, while Brampton and Caledon remain with the Region.

The question for *Tough Times*: will cash-poor people be better off?

And if so, where? With the Region or outside it?

And when will we know?

Mississauga Council called a public meeting to find out what the public thinks of the split idea. Of the 200 or so people present, most seemed to like it.

*Tough Times* asked about the folk

in Mississauga who are supported by payments from Ontario Works, Ontario Disability Support Program, other forms of welfare. OW alone has about 9,000 recipients a month in Mississauga, Brampton/Caledon has a few more.

Mississauga has all the shelters for homeless families and many singles. Wilkinson Road in Brampton is a shelter for men. Nobody wants to live in a shelter. There's no privacy, no quiet. People who've been there say there's no safety either.

Brampton has all the seven-days-a-week 365-days-a-year soup kitchens in Peel. Both of them. Only Knights Table offers three meals a day. It's

looking for a bigger place, to offer more services such as job training, help for addictions. Needs money.

Everybody needs cash. OW pays a single person \$733 a month, \$1,119 for a single parent with one child. The shelter allowance is part of that, listed at \$390 for a single, \$642 for parent and child. Pay less? Get less allowance.

Don't ever say you are homeless. Away goes your shelter allowance, and a single person is down to \$343 a month, \$360 for one person with child.

The current rates of pay for Ontario Works are set by Doug Ford's Progressive Conservative government, which pulled back a 1.5% increase in

OW budgeted by the previous Liberal government. Taxpayers provide the cash, no matter which political party pulls the purse strings.

Would the cash-poor be better off in a separate Mississauga?

*Tough Times* made a presentation at the public meeting. It said Mayor Bonnie Crombie has heart, as well as a good business head. That she, of all people, could persuade Doug Ford to increase allowances.

Soon?

The civil servants who will take care of legal details in a split, say it will take years.

So don't hold your breath.

## BY KIMBERLY NORTHCOTE

It was a mildly funny story disguised as a warning. An acquaintance told me about a friend who recently graduated from post-secondary and asked for a trip to the dentist as a Christmas gift.

Most post-secondary students have dentist visits covered by their school's insurance, but those in the workforce are often not so lucky. Full-time employees may receive a benefits package that includes regular dental cleanings, but those who are stringing together part-time work, freelancing, or self-employment must budget hundreds of dollars for oral care, as OHIP (Ontario Hospital Insurance Plan, financed by taxes) does not cover anything beyond emergency oral surgery performed in a hospital.

It would be easy to dismiss this as just a story about a cash-strapped millennial, but the implications go beyond an unconventional Christmas gift. Oral

## Time for medicare to open wide for savings in pain and problems

health is essential to overall health.

Lack of regular preventive care can lead to much larger problems, such as periodontal disease, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory problems, and poor nutrition.

Social impacts can be equally harmful, as those with teeth problems report they may avoid speaking, smiling, even socialising, and getting a job can be nearly impossible for someone with noticeable oral defects.

Dental problems can only be effectively treated by dentists, but those who cannot afford a dentist turn to a family physician, which costs time and money, without improving oral health in any real way.

Covering dentist visits under OHIP would free up cash and reduce the demand on family physicians. Besides, regular dental visits are more affordable than emergency room visits, dental surgeries, and treatment of related diseases, such as diabetes.

We often boast about Canada's health care coverage compared to that of the United States, but compared to many developed nations, Canada is still way behind. Britain, France, and Norway each spend more on healthcare than we do, and Finland and Sweden include dental care as part of their health care funding.

In 2015, \$13.6 billion was spent on dental services in Canada, only 6% of

which was covered by public funding. The rest was covered by private insurance or paid out-of-pocket.

Canadians spent a total \$5.1 billion out-of-pocket to pay for dental care in 2015. Imagine how much the quality of life would improve for all of us, especially for people who can't afford dental care, if at least some of that money paid for oral care to be covered by a publicly-administered plan, such as OHIP.

Maybe then we could afford the insulin and prescriptions that have also been left out of public funding and which cost individuals thousands of dollars a year.

*Kimberly Northcote has a Bachelor's degree in criminal justice and public policy from the University of Guelph, and a diploma in creative arts from Sheridan College. She has exhibited at Joshua Creek Heritage Arts Centre and Sheridan College.*

## Hepatitis C Treatment, Care & Support Is Available

### You can be at risk if:

- Sharing of personal care and hygiene items such as razors, toothbrushes, clippers and scissors with someone living with hepatitis C
- Sharing needles used for body tattoos and piercings. Reusing and sharing tattoo ink and ink pots
- Sharing drug equipment such as needles, filters, tourniquets, water, syringes, cookers, alcohol swabs, acidifiers
- Receive blood and body organs that have not been screened for hepatitis C. Even in Canada, if you received blood and organ donations before 1990 you may be at risk.
- Involved in medical procedures including immunization in hepatitis C endemic countries



Bloom Clinic

### Contact:

Bloom Clinic  
40 Finchgate Blvd. Suite 224, Brampton, ON L6T 3J1  
Phone: 905-451-6959 | mail@bramaleachc.ca



Call today for information or  
to book a free test.



## THE COMPASS

# More than just a food bank

BY AMANDA RYLLOTT  
AND JOHN WILSON

On a recent visit to The Compass Food Bank and Outreach Centre, Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie told clients and volunteers that her main focus since taking office in 2014 has been on keeping the city affordable.

Crombie understands that one of the main objectives of The Compass is to find safe, reliable, and affordable housing for all of its clients. The chronic lack of affordable housing is a situation that is difficult to deal with on a strictly municipal level, as the availability of space for affordable housing is created by the Region of Peel.

The city has continued in every year of Crombie's term, to increase the inventory of housing that is appropriate for all people regardless of income. But the waitlist as of June, 2018 for subsidized housing in Peel had 13,597 names on it. "Every year," Crombie says, "new housing units are bought, but every year the wait list gets even longer." This is just not sustainable in the long-term.

The past few months show a marked increase in the number of Compass clients who have become homeless, due mainly to the rising cost of rent and housing. Currently, more than 60 clients of The Compass are living in precarious situations, and 27 clients are living on the streets.

In June 2018, Mississauga's City Council approved a new Rental Housing Protection By-law, which was identified as a priority in its 2016 Making Room for the Middle housing strategy.

The Compass continues to work with all levels of government to increase the supply of affordable housing in Mississauga and give low-income community members a better life.

This winter, The Compass' new Winter Survival Program provided blankets and care packages to help our homeless clients make it through the cold weather, with several of our supporting churches providing beds to our homeless residents on nights when extreme cold weather alerts were declared.

The Compass also provides access to an employment coordinator, representatives from Ontario Works, Supportive Housing in Peel (SHIP)



A place to hang out, meet, eat, and learn. The Compass Food Bank and Outreach Centre is at 310 Lakeshore Road West, Mississauga, at the corner with Benson Avenue. (Illustration by Mark C. Paszkiewicz)

and Peel Addiction Assessment and Referral Centre (PAARC). But it will take months, if not years, to realize any longer-term solution to Mississauga's affordable housing needs.

Consequently, for many Compass clients, maintaining a diet that includes healthy, fresh foods can also be difficult. Many obstacles hinder access to food – housing insecurity, low wages, and precarious employment are just some of the systemic issues which contribute to food inaccessibility.

If most of your income is keeping a roof over your head and paying the bills, how much money can you spend on healthy food? If you are not living in a home, how can you cook or store food? How can one find employment to afford these things?

Healthy, fresh foods tend to cost more than processed foods and therefore they can be out of reach for lower-income families. Non-perishable food items are such an important part of food banks that the need for fresh foods is often

overlooked or difficult to coordinate in these systems. Canned or packaged foods allow people who may not have many amenities to continue to make meals.

But provision of fresh foods should not be overlooked, especially when members use food banks long-term.

A program The Compass has introduced to make fresh produce more accessible is the Good Food Box (GFB). In partnership with FoodShare Toronto, The Compass provides space for community members to get a variety of produce at a lower price than at a grocery store.

Similar to community-supported agriculture, consumers sign up for the GFB beforehand and collect their box of produce the following Thursday.

This program is open to clients of The Compass and to community members for a scaling price. Clients of The Compass pay \$14 per box while community members pay \$19. Community members who participate in GFB are subsidizing the boxes for clients and making balanced diets more accessible

to people living on low-income.

The problem in South Mississauga is not that there is a lack of available food, but a lack of equal access to food.

Providing food to low-income families and individuals helps to fill the gaps in the short term, but it is not a solution to the issue of chronic food insecurity. Therefore, it is important for food banks to do more than just provide food.

The Compass is committed to advocating for its clients and promoting greater awareness of the underlying issues that cause people to experience food insecurity and precarious housing in our community.

---

*John Wilson is Managing Editor of Compass Directions, a newsletter published quarterly.*

*Amanda Rylott is a Contributing Writer to Compass Directions. She has a master's degree in Agrarian Food and Environmental Studies from the International Institute of Social Studies of Erasmus University, Rotterdam.*



# Canada Arrivals Arrivées Canada



## Are you new to Mississauga, Brampton or Caledon



Visit **ImmigrationPeel.ca**, the official government website for:

- Job Search
- Housing
- Language Training (English and French)
- Schools, Colleges and Universities
- Government Benefits
- Citizenship Information
- Newcomer Services in Peel
- Child Care and much more!

Use the Community Services Map to find services near you.

Visit **ImmigrationPeel.ca** today!

A Resource for Newcomers and Employers

 [@immigrationpeel.ca](https://twitter.com/immigrationpeel.ca)

Canada 

 Ontario